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(b) when the vacancies occurred in each case;
(c) when they were filled up permanently in each case;
(d) whether any of them have not yet been filled up; and if so, which;
(e) what, if any, are the reasons for not filling up the said vacancies permanently;
(f) whether there are no competent people to fill up the vacancies;
(g) whether any direct recruitment to fill up the vacancies is contemplated; and
(h) when the vacancies are likely to be filled up and how?

A.—(a) Five.
(b) 3rd March; 1st July; 9th August; 19th September; and 6th November 1924.
(c) & (d) None of the vacancies has been permanently filled up.
(e) (f) & (h) The question of filling up the vacancies permanently is under consideration.
(g) No.

II

DISCUSSION REGARDING STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.

[*Note.*—An asterisk (*) at the beginning of each speech indicates revision by the Member.]

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar :—"I think, Sir, the first hour has to be devoted to questions. Now that we have finished all the starred questions can we not proceed with the unstarred ones?"

* The hon. the President :—"I do not know what the House would like to do in the matter. We have so far agreed not to have oral questions put on unstarred questions and the Government, I presume, are not prepared for any supplementary questions on the 'unstarred' questions. If it is the desire of the House that when the 'starred' questions are over within the hour, we should go on with the 'unstarred' ones, the point will be considered and it is one which is very much in the hands of the House. As our present procedure is experimental we have not yet framed any Standing Orders authorising the procedure. The point will certainly be noted. I say this because I have observed in another Council that 'unstarred' questions were being dealt with after the 'starred' questions were over. But it is a Council where the number of 'starred' questions is not in any way as large as it is here."

Rai Bahadur T. M. Narasimhacharlu :—"With reference to this matter, when I raised the question of validity of the ruling upon 'unstarred' questions, you asked me to communicate my views. I did so a few weeks back and I do not know what has happened."

* The hon. the President :—"I have seen the hon. Member's opinion and I am very much indebted to him for it. The Secretary will communicate to him the substance of what I have noted on the opinion. I do not profess to be able to recollect all that I said in the written communication If he would please wait—I hope the communication is already on its way to him—and then raise any further points at question-time we can further consider the matter."

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* Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May we know whether any scrutiny is made upon the starred questions as we send them? Supposing we send a large number of questions starred, is there anything done in your office to restrict the number ?".

11-45 a.m.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Whatever is done is in accordance with the announcement made by me. That is to say, Members' starred questions are taken up as such and communicated to the departments. When answers are received, not more than eight questions for each Member are put down for each day. Consequently, if the number of starred questions sent up by an hon. Member exceeds the number of days available in a sitting multiplied by eight, it will necessarily follow that the balance of the starred questions will either have to be renewed by him as starred questions for the next month's meeting or included in the official report with their answers in the same manner as unstarred questions. I have already informed hon. Members that it is open to them to adopt whichever course they like If they wish their questions to be answered as soon as possible, then it will be better that the balance of questions is answered in the official report like unstarred questions. But if they want an opportunity of putting oral supplementary questions, it is better to renew them and wait till they are answered as starred questions."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" I thought there was no necessity to renew the question for the next month. When we put a number of starred questions, it is with the hope that all our questions will be answered in the same meeting. All of them may be taken as starred questions, and if by chance the Government are liberal in sending answers to more than eight questions of one Member, eight questions may be answered on one day and the others the next day."

The hon the PRESIDENT :—" That is what is being done. If it is the desire of hon. Members that so long as the session lasts—this time it will be till the end of March or the first few days of April—all starred questions should be kept on the list and answered as starred questions during the session, it can be done. If, on the other hand, they want the starred questions to be answered expeditiously during the interval, we shall have to do something else."

Rai Bahadur T. M. NARASIMHACHARLU :—" If there is time after answering the supplementary questions on starred questions, may I know whether you will not permit supplementary questions to be put on the unstarred questions ?"

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The point was raised by the hon. Member for Bellary. I said there were two difficulties; one was that the Government had no notice of this intention; therefore they would not be prepared with answers for supplementary questions; and the second was that we have had a certain understanding up to now, and until we arrive at another understanding it is better that we go on with the present experiment."

Mr. G. RAMESWARA RAO :—" If we put supplementary questions on unstarred questions, are they to be answered on the same day, or will seven days' notice be insisted on ?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" It will depend on the ability of the Government to answer them immediately."

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Mr. G. RAMESWARA RAO :—" Why I raise this question is this. Yesterday I handed over to the Secretary, few supplementary questions in writing and I am not sure when they will be answered."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" It is always a matter of uncertainty what time will be required to furnish an answer to a question, whether original or supplementary."

Sriman SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo :—" Oral supplementary questions will not be allowed in regard to unstarred questions. That is to say, written supplementary questions will be allowed. Supposing we write out and hand in written supplementary questions before the order of the day commences for questions and answers, then may we not have an answer the same day? That is my doubt."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" It will depend on the nature of the question. But I would like the Government to consider the matter. It is hardly necessary to ask them however, because a question may demand a great amount of time and reference to other authorities."

Mr. G. RAMESWARA RAO :—" When we hand in written questions, I hope they will at once be sent to the Member in charge. May we not then expect an answer as soon as possible? I am aware that in the case of original questions notice is required under the Standing Orders. But in the case of oral questions, when they are handed in writing can they not be answered immediately without the usual notice? It is my intention to ask for answers regarding my questions. As a matter of fact, if the questions were starred, the Government would have to answer them without notice. So when written questions are handed to them, they may be expected to answer them, unless they find it indispensable to ask for some time to answer."

* Mr. P. L. MOORE :—" I have a little experience of answering these questions in my office. I should like very definitely to say that it would be absolutely impossible to expect written supplementary questions put on one morning to be answered the same day. It is impossible to answer any other questions in the course of the same morning. I think it will be very unfair to the office."

* The hon the PRESIDENT :—" I think the hon. Member from Ganjam did not insist upon questions being answered the very same day or the next day. What he wanted to know was whether Government would insist on the seven days' notice in the case of written supplementary questions exactly as in the case of original questions. I think the Government will not insist on such notice."

Sriman SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo :—" I am afraid that we are day by day deviating from the very spirit of supplementary questions. First, we had the privilege of putting supplementary questions to every question we put. According to the present system, we have agreed that we shall have supplementary questions put only to the starred questions. That means our privilege is restricted to the starred questions. Again, the Government is bound to answer as far as possible all supplementary questions put in this House on those questions. But here in respect of our giving written supplementary questions to unstarred questions, we are not able to get answers the

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same day, though as a matter of fact they ought to be able to give answers that very day under the old system. I think that is how we are deviating from the spirit underlying the system of supplementary questions "

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Surely the hon. Member does not overlook the answer sometimes given 'I want notice.' The answers are given in print, and under the old system when oral supplementary questions were put, the Government often wanted notice and the same notice may occasionally be required in regard to oral supplemental questions. Also, in the previous system the Government had notice of the fact that they had to answer supplementary questions. But now they would be quite unprepared for any further questions, being assured of the fact that there would be no supplementary questions, with regard to the unstarred questions. There is no deviation therefore."

Sriman SASIBHUSHAN RATH Mahasayo :—" If the Government ask for notice, it is a deviation."

Mr. G RAMESWARA RAO :—" May we take it that all supplementary questions given in writing would be answered the same day or on the next ? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" May I call the attention of the hon Member to Standing Order 18 ? 'A Member to whom a supplementary question is addressed may decline to answer it without notice, in which case the supplementary question may be put only in the form of a fresh question at a subsequent meeting of the Council.' I do not see any reason why we should not follow in this case the Council's own deliberate Standing Order. "

Mr. G. RAMESWARA RAO :—" I only want to know where Government are in a position to answer why they should not do it without delay."

* The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" May I point out that the Government do not insist on the seven days' notice ? The procedure is that any question coming in is taken up at once for answer, and as soon as the answer is ready it is passed on to the Council Office."

Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR :—" There is one difficulty. In the case of supplementary questions to unstarred questions, are we not to have notice beforehand ? Suppose I send half a dozen questions and they are to be answered on a particular day, by what process are the Members of the House to be kept informed of the fact that these supplementary questions will be answered that day ? "

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" For what purpose does the hon. Member want previous notice ? Answers to supplementary unstarred questions will only be given in print, and when they reach the hon. Members in print it will certainly be open to them to consider what further questions may be put. I do not think there is anything gained by giving previous notice "

* Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Do I understand that we shall get answers to these supplementary questions only when we get the reports of these proceedings ? Now it takes three to four weeks before we get the printed report of the Council Proceedings. My second point is this. I quite realize the point the hon. the Leader of the House raised, viz., that under the Standing Order Government can ask for notice when they cannot answer a supplementary question. What other hon. Members and I want to guard against is that

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the Government should not make it a kind of unwritten law that, with regard to all unstarred questions, supplementary questions will be answered only after notice. I do not know if I have made myself clear. There are supplementary questions and supplementary questions. Some of them are answered at once, and for some of them they ask for notice. That is the rule we are following with regard to oral questions With regard to written questions, what the hon. the Leader of the House and Mr. Moore want is to treat them practically as if they were new questions."

* The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I should like to point out to my hon. Friend that he is not in the least correct in stating that to be my desire. As I have already said, we want merely that we should not be deprived of the privilege of asking for notice in the case of supplementary questions."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I should add with reference to the first question put by the hon. Member for the University that I do not see any reason why the answers to supplementary questions should not be printed along with answers to unstarred questions day by day as they come in from the Government. I shall see that it is so done by the Council Office."

III

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I have to inform the House that Mr. Muhammad Moosa Sait was nominated for election to the Finance Committee. As the number nominated is equal to the number of vacancy to be filled, namely one, I do hereby declare the abovementioned gentleman to be duly elected under Regulation II (4) of the Regulations for the holding of elections by means of the single transferable vote."

IV

AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS OF THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Standing Orders 2 (2), 6 (3), 40 (2) *and* 64.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I have to inform the House that the following six gentlemen were nominated for election to the Select Committee to consider the amendments to Standing Orders 2 (2), 6 (3), 40 (2) and 64 :—

1. Rao Bahadur C. Natesa Mudaliyar.
2. Mr. J. A Saldanha.
3. Mr. G. Rameswara Rao.
4. Mr. S. Satyamurti.
5. Khan Bahadur Khalifulla Sahib Bahadur.
6. Diwan Bahadur W. Vijayaraghava Mudaliyar.

As the number of candidates nominated is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, namely, six, I do hereby declare the abovementioned gentlemen to be duly elected under Regulation II (4) of the Regulations for the holding of elections by means of the single transferable vote. As already announced, Mr A. Ramaswami Mudaliyar, one of the Chairmen of the Council, has been nominated by me to serve on the Committee under Standing Order 76 in addition to the Deputy President and the Advocate-General who will be on the Committee *ex officio*."